

On Wednesday, a senior adviser to Mr. Kerry, Joe Lockhart, signaled that the ban would become a campaign issue. He said that Mr. Kerry planned to discuss the ban Monday, at an event timed to coincide with its expiration. Mr. Kerry, he said, "believes the cynical deal between the president and the House Republican leadership, hiding behind procedure, is completely unacceptable."

A poll released this week by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania found that 68 percent of Americans—and 32 percent of N.R.A. members—support renewing the ban. The findings, drawn from interviews with 4,959 adults, had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus one percentage point.

A separate national survey, conducted by Doug Schoen, a Democratic pollster, on behalf of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, found that 74 percent of voters support renewing the ban, but that support is highest—79 percent—among independent voters who are being courted by President Bush and Mr. Kerry. That survey of 800 voters had a margin of error of three percentage points.

Mr. Schoen, who is not advising the Kerry campaign, also surveyed voters in the swing states of Ohio, Florida and Pennsylvania and concluded that support for the ban was high enough to make it a significant issue. "If Kerry wants to distinguish his position from Bush, this provides a very convenient vehicle," he said.

But over all, Democrats have not talked much about the weapons ban. Senator Patty Murray, the Washington Democrat who is in a tough re-election fight, said voters, unaware that the ban was set to expire, had not made it an issue, and that neither had she.

"There are so many issues, education and health care and jobs and the economy in my state right now," Ms. Murray said. "People are really focused on that."

And over the years the ban has been a losing issue for Democrats. After Republicans took control of the House in 1994, President Clinton remarked that the ban might have cost Democrats 20 seats. Some believe that former Vice President Al Gore lost crucial states, including his home state, Tennessee, in the 2000 election because he came out too strongly for gun control.

Even the ban's chief Democratic backers in Congress, Senator Feinstein and Representative Carolyn McCarthy of New York, acknowledged that Democrats were afraid to be too vocal in their support. "In the small states in particular, and the rural states, the control of the N.R.A. is much greater," said Ms. Feinstein, adding, They will specifically target a member, including a House member, and go after them."

The N.R.A. has also said it will not endorse a candidate for president until after Congress recesses for the fall election, a pronouncement that the ban's backers say is tantamount to a threat not to endorse Mr. Bush until the ban expires. Mr. LaPierre said the claim was "100 percent untrue." But he blamed Democrats for the bill's undoing, saying they had tried, unwisely, to use it to gain political advantage when Mr. Clinton was president.

"I guess you could say politics is what enacted it in the first place," he said. "Politics is going to be the undoing of it."

On Wednesday, as the police chiefs and victims' relatives fanned out across Capitol Hill to lobby lawmakers, a chief target was the House speaker, Representative J. Dennis Hastert of Illinois. In recent weeks, advocates for the ban have been approaching Mr. Hastert at bookstores around the country, where he has been signing copies of his new autobiography, "Speaker."

Several, including Mr. Mauser, said that Mr. Hastert seemed supportive. "He said yes, I support that," said Penny Okamoto, who said she saw Mr. Hastert on Aug. 16 at a Barnes & Noble store in Beaverton, Ore. "I was so surprised, I actually asked him twice."

But on Wednesday, the speaker was non-committal, saying that if the Senate was to adopt the bill, "then we'll take a look at it."

Mr. Mauser said he was not satisfied with that, and would knock on Mr. Hastert's door on Thursday. He said that he had already spoken with an aide to his own congressman, Representative Tom Tancredo, a Republican who opposes the ban, and that the meeting did not go well.

"It ended on a pretty bad note," Mr. Mauser said. "Not even a shake of the hand."

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I hereby submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report prepared by the Congressional Budget Office under Section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended. This report meets the requirements for Senate scorekeeping of section 5 of S. Con. Res. 32, the first concurrent resolution on the budget for 1986.

This report shows the effects of congressional action on the 2004 budget through September 8, 2004. The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of the 2004 concurrent resolution on the budget, H. Con. Res. 95, as adjusted.

The estimates show that current level spending is above the budget resolution by \$8.0 billion in budget authority and by \$31 million in outlays in 2004. Current level for revenues is \$3.1 billion above the budget resolution in 2004.

Since my last report dated July 12, 2004, the Congress has cleared and the President has signed the following acts which changed budget authority, outlays, or revenues for 2004: the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2004, Part IV (P.L. 108-280); the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005 (P.L. 108-287); and, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2004 (P.L. 108-303).

I ask unanimous consent that the report and accompanying letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, September 9, 2004.

Hon. DON NICKLES,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed tables show the effects of Congressional action on the 2004 budget and are current through September 8, 2004. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of H. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2004, as adjusted. Pursuant to section 502 of H. Con. Res. 95, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. As a result, the enclosed current level report excludes budget authority of \$2 billion from funds provided in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-303).

Since my last letter, dated July 12, 2004, the Congress has cleared and the President has signed the following acts, which changed budget authority, outlays, or revenues for 2004:

The Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2004, Part IV (Public Law 108-280);

The Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005 (Public Law 108-287); and

The Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2004 (Public Law 108-303).

The effects of these actions are detailed in Table 2.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN,
Director.

Enclosures.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT-LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004, AS OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2004

(In billions of dollars)

	Budget resolution	Current level ¹	Current level over/under (-) resolution
On-budget:			
Budget authority	1,873.5	1,881.4	8.0
Outlays	1,897.0	1,897.0	*
Revenues	1,331.0	1,334.1	3.1
Off-budget:			
Social Security outlays	380.4	380.4	0
Social Security revenues	557.8	557.8	*

¹ Current level is the estimated effect on revenue and spending of all legislation that the Congress has enacted or sent to the President for his approval. In addition, full-year funding estimates under current law are included for entitlement and mandatory programs requiring annual appropriations even if the appropriations have not been made.

Note.—* = less than \$50 million.

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT-LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004, AS OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2004

(In millions of dollars)

	Budget authority	Outlays	Revenues
Enacted in previous sessions:			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	1,330,756
Permanents and other spending legislation ¹	1,117,131	1,077,938	n.a.
Appropriation legislation	1,148,942	1,179,843	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	-365,798	-365,798	n.a.
Total, enacted in previous sessions:	1,900,275	1,891,983	1,330,756

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT-LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004, AS OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2004—

Continued

(In millions of dollars)

	Budget authority	Outlays	Revenues
Enacted this session:			
Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2004 (P.L. 108–202)	1,328	0	0
Social Security Protection Act of 2004 (P.L. 108–203)	685	685	0
Welfare Reform Extension Act of 2004 (P.L. 108–210)	107	58	0
Act to reauthorize certain school lunch and child nutrition programs through June 30, 2004 (P.L. 108–211)	6	6	0
Pension Funding Equity Act of 2004 (P.L. 108–218)	0	0	3,363
An act to require the Secretary of Defense to reimburse members of the United States Armed Forces for certain transportation expenses (P.L. 108–220)	13	7	0
Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2004, Part II (P.L. 108–224)	482	0	0
TANF and Related Programs Continuation Act of 2004 (P.L. 108–262)	80	35	0
Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2004, Part III (P.L. 108–263)	422	0	0
Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L. 108–265)	7	6	0
Act approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 (P.L. 108–272)	0	0	–2
Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2004, Part IV (P.L. 108–280)	–646	–7	0
AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004 (H.R. 4103)	0	0	–2
Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005 (P.L. 108–287)	0	10	0
Total, enacted this session:	2,484	800	3,359
Entitlements and mandates: Difference between enacted levels and budget resolution estimates for appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	–21,334	4,221	n.a.
Total Current Level ^{1,2}	1,881,425	1,897,004	1,334,115
Total Budget Resolution	1,873,459	1,896,973	1,331,000
Current Level Over Budget Resolution	7,966	31	3,115
Current Level Under Budget Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

¹ Pursuant to section 502 of H. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2004, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. As a result, the current level excludes \$82,460 million in budget authority and \$36,644 million in outlays from previously enacted bills. From the current session, the current level excludes \$27,656 million in budget authority and \$154 million in outlays from the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005 (P.L. 108–287) and \$2,000 million in budget authority from the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2004 (P.L. 108–303). In addition, pursuant to section 312(c)(3)(A) of S. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2005, up to \$500 million in budget authority and \$330 million in outlays for wildland fire suppression accounts are exempt from the enforcement of the budget resolution for the current fiscal year. In this current level report, these amounts are excluded from the total for the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005 (P.L. 108–287).

² Excludes administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget.

Notes: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

NURSE-MANAGED CLINICS VITAL TO VA

Mr. GRAHAM of Florida. Mr. President, nurses are an invaluable resource for the VA health care system, as well as for health care systems the world over. As such, VA has established nurse-managed primary care clinics at many of its medical centers. These clinics are run by nurse practitioners who serve as independent practitioners with prescriptive authority and a focus on delivering cost-effective, efficient, high quality care. I am pleased to say that on July 6, 2004, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, of which I am ranking member, received VA's favorable report on these clinics, entitled, "Nurse-Managed Primary Care Clinics Evaluation."

To complete this report, VA identified three clinics in three VISNs: Fergus Falls, MN; Denver, CO; and Madison, WI. VA then evaluated patient satisfaction, access to care, provider experiences, functional status of patients receiving care, cost of care, and waiting times. Overall, the report concluded that veterans seem immensely satisfied with the care they receive at the clinics and that the costs associated with them are reasonable. I am very proud of the success of these clinics, though not at all surprised by the quality of care provided by VA's nurse practitioners.

The patients surveyed at the three clinics stated that they were highly satisfied with the services received there, especially in terms of length of time spent waiting at the office, time spent with the veteran, explanation of what was done for the patient, technical skills and personal manner of staff, as well as the overall visit. In addition, 67 percent of the veterans served by these clinics rated them good on wait times, convenience of the of-

fice location, and the ability to get through to the office by telephone.

The Nurse-Managed Primary Care Clinics Evaluation resulted from a June 14, 2001, hearing conducted by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. At this hearing, in-depth discussion about innovations at a nurse-managed clinic took place. Subsequently, nurse recruitment and retention provisions were included in Public Law 107–135, which included an evaluation of nurse-managed health care clinics in VA. I am pleased that the committee was able to effect the survey that resulted in this extremely encouraging report.

Currently, VA employs 36,000 registered nurses, approximately 6 percent of which are nurse practitioners. Nurses have long been recognized by VA, as well as those of us who oversee it, as indispensable to the delivery of health care. In fact, according to a 1999 article by M.O. Munding in *Nursing Economics*, nurse practitioners are able to effectively provide 90 percent of the services primary care physicians do. In recognizing the great value nurses hold, VA has done all it can to foster and fully utilize these essential members of the health care community. Its nurse-managed primary care clinics are one important, and successful, facet of this effort.

NAMING OF THE USS "SOMERSET"

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I speak today on the naming of the USS *Somerset*. On Thursday, September 9, 2004, the United States Navy named the ninth ship of the San Antonio-class of amphibious transport dock ships as *Somerset*.

The naming of the USS *Somerset* honors Somerset County, the county in Pennsylvania where United Airlines

Flight 93 crashed after fearless passengers stormed the cockpit preventing the airplane from hitting its intended target. The USS *Somerset* stands as a reminder of the 40 passengers and crew who exhibited courage and sacrifice in the most dangerous of situations.

The USS *Somerset* also symbolizes the renewed hope, compassion, and cooperation that citizens across our country have shared with one another since that horrific day. September 11, 2001, the day that changed our history and our lives was intended to unravel America's strength, but it has only made us stronger.

When I returned from my first visit to the crash site in Shanksville, PA, I was inspired by the strength of the Flight 93 family members who, being able to keep a better world in sight, now carry the torch of their loved ones. As the USS *Somerset* carries out its mission by providing transport to Marines embarking on expeditionary warfare missions and special operations, let us not forget the compassion of those who provided aid and support to the family and friends of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, as well as the courage and responsibility displayed by the heroes aboard Flight 93.

As we reflect on the passing of the third anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, let us not forget the resolve our Nation faced in light of our tragedy. By honoring the memories of all those lost to the terrorist attacks, through the naming of the USS *Somerset*, we are reminded of what the American spirit is capable of. I will never forget the bravery and sacrifice witnessed on that tragic day 3 years ago. May God continue to bless our country as each of us continues to find our own way to exhibit this renewed American spirit.